

**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RACIALISATION PROCESSES IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA**

**INTRODUCTION**

The complex origins and the ongoing power and durability of racism (Law, 2012) across Nigeria provide central focus for this investigative project. Worldwide, the “sobering reality” (January-Bardill, 2005, P. 22) has become noticed and continues, on daily basis, to affect the lives of individuals economically, socially, politically and culturally. Hence, this analysis will reveal ways through which racialisation processes, encouraged by social constructions of identity, congregate, hold, work, deviate, express power and shape national and local consciousness in the country (Spickard, 2005).

By using the concepts of Howard Winant (2001) that “*The World is a Ghetto*” and David Goldberg’s (2006) “Racial Europeanisation”, the paper will explain how overt and covert mechanisms of historical colonial legacy set the tone, terms and the frameworks for racial rationalities.

After a brief history, the text will analyse racialized government activities based on effects of politics, nationalism, ethnic identity and ideologies that have been used to justify discrimination and marginalisation (Dikotter, 1997). This approach demonstrates a great deal of what goes on in the context of north and south arrangements, as well as legislative procedures at national and local levels including relations of security forces and the military.

Thirdly, the paper will discuss different forms and experiences of racialisation driven by intersectionality, ethno-religious and superstitious beliefs, sex and gender, cultural tensions at a given place and time (Banton, 1983). Finally, the paper will evaluate ways in which racism and corruption, intrinsically bound in a social and economic manner, are articulated, inscribed, developed and established throughout the country (Jenkins, 2004).

Therefore, this project is not only an endeavour to advance racial contours that will provoke global discourse and debates about the existence of racism in Nigeria, but also highlight how millions of people are being treated without dignity and respect by inescapable racial attitude that has become part of the nation (Berth, 1969).

**[1] HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND COLONIAL LEGACY**

Fundamentally, Nigeria has always been racially and ethnically diverse nation that has developed through complex historical migration patterns, periods of conflicts, conquests, colonisation and post-colonisation eras (Falola and Matthew, 2016). Presently, the country is composed of 250 ethnic groups and the most influential ones include Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, Ijaw, Kanuri, Ibibio, and Tiv. As civilisation and communities emerged, these ethnic groups were transformed to varying levels of political, economic, cultural and social spheres of activity in the country. Falola and Matthew have recorded that northern Nigeria is mostly Islamic and dominated by the Hausa/Fulani group, while the southern part is predominantly Christians. However, it is estimated that half of the Yorubas, who occupy the Southwest are Muslims, while the Igbos in the Southeast tend to be Roman Catholics. In general terms, the southern part is more westernised and urbanised than the north.

Historically, the 1950s were a time of constitutional arrangements and party political rivalries as various ethnic groups, particularly women, were excluded from socio-economic activities and political representations during the colonial era (Crowder, 1978). According to Crowder, the British deliberately introduced colonial policies that were accompanied by coercion, oppression, discrimination and marginalisation not only to enable them carry out their imperial exploitative activities, but also to hinder sections of people from aspiring to another progressive level. By 1953, Northern Members of parliament demanded self-government, and by 1954, the principles of federation was adopted (Crowder, 1978).

As independence approached so also the concept of regionalisation amongst the Nigeria's elitist groups who were already split right down ethnic and racialized lines (Hatch, 1971). According to Hatch, nationalist politics accelerated legacies of resentment, prejudice, mistrust and fear of subjugation because unification process of the country favoured a monopoly of a sector. Eventually, in 1960 Nigeria gained independence, and a northerner became the premier. This outcome, according to Hatch, inflamed regional hostilities because the northerners, who constituted more than half of the nation's territories, did not only control their regional assembly but also the federal government in Lagos. In 1966, there were two military coups d'états, and the climax of these conflicts led to the declaration of the Eastern region as an independent Biafran State which collapsed after three years of a bloody civil war. In 1970, a "coerced national identity and integration" policy was imposed on Nigeria by the federal military government headed by a northerner (Nayar, 1975, P. 322). Hence, the racial polarization that has characterised political, economic, cultural and social life in contemporary Nigeria dates back prior to independence.

Over the years, the concept of nationhood (Mann, 2005) assumed a divine 'born to rule' position that appears to assign northern elites the birth right to remain in power (Awolabi, 2009, P. 118).

Accompanying this leadership style emerged new designs and prospects of enslavement, estrangement, colonisation, dominance, degradation, and even death, for those made servile (Goldberg, 1990). Like the British imperialists, the aggressiveness to uphold the structures of self-imposed superiority in search of new forms of desires, wealth, exotic goods and excitements hides beneath state edicts and hate policies. Hence, the prevailing fashion to impose themselves as the internal colonisers and masters is not only viewed as a continuation of the classic policies and practices of the British colonial authorities, but as an attitude that deepens structural divisions, cultural stratifications and ethnic sectionalism in the country. The worst part is none of the country's leaders, military or civilian, has attempted to devise a programme or policy that might encourage interaction between communities or promote a vision of the nation transcending the racial divides or highlighting shared values and aspirations (Awolabi, 2009; Suberu, 2001).

Consequently, these mechanisms of imbalance of power contributed to the diversification of the population of Nigeria as well as the lasting animosities that have hampered the construction of an integral society. This symbolises that contemporary racism has constitutive connection morphed over time because the modes of racial governance and the orders of racist exclusion, humiliation and death that are deeply rooted in the country, were set in place a while ago (Du Bois, 1987). Under such circumstances, Marx and Engels (1884) declared the treatment of cultural and ethnic identities as an obstacle to universal progress of humanity because class relations increasingly lead to divisions. Indeed, this brief outline of relational account of racialized process does not only contribute to historical legacy, but throw some light on the profound influences that have helped fashion the mind sets and relations between races (Essed, 1991), as well as reveal how the colonialists shaped Nigeria, planted racisms' roots in place, designed their social conditions and cemented its structural arrangements (Stone and Dennis, 2003).

## **[2] THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF MILITARY POWER AND RACIALISATION**

It is assumed that racism is a dynamic process by which racial concepts, groupings and divisions come to structure and embed themselves in thought, politics, policy and legislation of a system (Fanon, 1967). This then expands into conceiving race as a force of prejudice through which the elite class exhibit, shape and refine their practices of governing ideas and hypocrisy, including the direction of ethnic cleansing and racialisation. Because the relationship between the ruling class and the subjects demands legitimate organisational authorities such as the armies, police forces and secret agents to prevent the subjects from boiling over. And, if police or the military are used to displace populations, then they will be over-represented among the ethnic cleaners (Goldberg, 1990).

For obvious reasons, Nigeria has a peculiar context when the militancy of Boko Haram and Niger Delta insurgencies are given a serious consideration. According to the Nigerian Population Commission (2014), Nigeria has over 170 million people, and by 2020, the population might get beyond 200 million. With such a huge population, yet, the country establishes one military university to train military workforces, and it is located in the northern region (Olusewa, 2016). Secondly, out of the six geo-political zones, applicants from a particular ethnic territory are usually dominant in the

recruitment exercise into the academy. Statistics from the Nigerian Defence Academy (2016) have shown that in 2014/2015, 62% of successful candidates for 74rri Nigerian Army were from the north as compared to 38% from the south. This statistical imbalance, confirmed by Taiwo (2008), has been on-going since the establishment of the academy. And, the categorisation of ethnic priorities shows that the larger the group, the more likely a candidate is favoured which is mainly from the Hausa/Fulani enclave.

The flames of these demographic concerns are fuelled by the fact that in Nigeria's context "distancing" is regarded as a "tradition of historicism" that is difficult, if not impossible, to modernise (Goldberg, 2006, P. 341). This seems to suggest that the location including the recruitment processes into the armed forces, serve as an invisible border line demarcating the north and south that cannot not be changed. Surreptitiously, the border line is inscribed neither at the level of personal relations, nor of social and sexual intercourse, but in the crevices of political boundaries, power relations, institutional access as well as full membership and citizenship requirements in the polity (Goldberg, 2006).

Quite often, the recruitment process is always flawed because transparency, academic qualifications, merits, talents, passion and performances are not taken into account (The Guardian news, 2016). As a result, many able-bodied and enthusiastic young persons who are distanced on account of location and of ethnic backgrounds become susceptible to criminal activities in response to demands for labour. Clearly, the Hausa/Fulani majority within the security services regularly restrict entry for others, in order to maximise their own advantage of race superiority. Emmanuel (2012) argues that members of these tribes are not only rich and influential, but also build a myth around themselves because belonging to such a group translates into quick promotions, political power and access to national resources.

Similarly, Ojukwu (1989) argues that despite north/south, east/west, Muslim/Christian, commissioned/non-commissioned dichotomies that exist within the military, acknowledging such an ethno-regional power becomes a process of establishing a degree of legitimacy and measures of stability within the divided military. In other words, the one-sidedness of power has become the driving force through which the military institutions are organised, managed and run because failure to acknowledge ethno-military power risks a challenge to the status quo. Certainly, the increasing regional imbalance within the armed forces does not only create domination over minorities, but shapes the scope of military politics in terms of its affiliations with other social groups of interests and identities (Ewuola, 2011).

For decades, these practices have been going on unattended, yet, the complex affairs of religion have always been used as an excuse to blur the issues and reduce everything to a competition between Christianity and Islam, or north versus south (Falola and Matthew, 2016). Effectively, the ruling class at the federal, state and local levels subtly play up these sentiments, and tap in to this divided experience to gain popular support and maintain their territory and position.

In Nigeria, the nature of military experience has always been questionable, and under current circumstances, there may well be some officers who feel not to fight against Boko Haram who are advocating for autonomy since 2003 in the Northeast of the country (Tribune news, 2010). Although some critics may attribute the failure of the armed forces to incapacity, but research has revealed that deep-rooted, inter-ethnic rivalry, supported and encouraged by the highest level of the security authorities and the ruling elites to manage and sustain racial hierarchies in favour of the dominant group, prevents the military from containing the Islamic sect and the Niger Delta insurgencies. Hence, the likelihood of ending Nigeria's security threats and sectarian violence seems like a distant prospect.

### **[3] THE CONCEPT OF EXCLUSIONARY DOMINATION**

#### **3.1 The Case of Ogoni People and Ethnic Cleansing**

In Nigeria, racially produced outcomes, conditions and passions, from neighbourhoods to households and individuals, have become habitual, mechanised and impersonal (Rex and Moore, 1967).

Certainly, the authorities, with an ideology of race superiority and dominant ethnic nationality, have

acquired the necessary skills and personalities through modern conditions of economic power and political mobilisation to justify their actions.

By closer examination, the Ogoni people of South-south Nigeria have been systematically exposed to such ideology of dominance by the authorities to validate their techniques of ethnic cleansing (Mann, 2005). Since the discovery of oil and gas, this region has suffered extreme environmental, biological, ecological degradation and health hazards through widespread contamination of soil, water, air and farm produce (Coomans, 1996).

For decades, the ruling class kept the Ogoni communities uninformed about the damages created by the activities of the oil companies. As part of the State evil (Mann, 2005), neither the authorities nor the oil companies had produced basic health and environmental impact studies that could enable the inhabitants of Ogoni land to be protected against harmful activities. Being aware of the violations of these rights, the Nigerian authorities, military and civilian, covertly organised and managed the strategy of extinction against the Ogoni people (Coomans, 1996).

It is the enormity of death in this community that reveals the deleterious effects of racial application policy because no government is totally committed to resolving this crisis (Diette-preye, 2013). For example, in 1995, Saro-wiwa Ken, human rights activist and President of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) was hanged by the military government of Sani Abacha because indigenes of Ogoni had claimed that oil companies and the Nigerian authorities had committed crimes on the bases of racism and ethnocentrism (UNEP, 2015).

From all indications, the Ogoni people have been methodically suppressed, subjugated and excluded due to the strategy of “one-model-fits-all” approach adopted by the Nigerian authorities (Modood, 2005, P. 72). This enactment, which is still very much in today’s Nigeria, is summarised as an intentional behaviour to deprive the Ogoni people of their rights, power and privileges as well as an alternative means of survival.

Apparently, the Ogoni people are kept in a tightly knit web of poverty through which their anger periodically erupts into bloody fighting between tribes, clans and individuals (The Nation, 2015). Also, shame, envy and disgust experienced by living in vulnerable, insecure economic and social settings, together with individual failure and a sense that others are receiving more favourable opportunities usually facilitate internal crisis and hostilities. Such behaviour, understandably, reinforces the status quo’s existence and domination over a divided citizenry (Essed, 1991). Thus, the highly durable persisting of socio-economic inequalities, cultural divisions as well as lack of progress in this land are directly connected to racial conception and governing ideas (Weber, 1978).

### **[3.2] The case of Pro-Biafra**

Since racism is described as an undesirable attitude of an individual towards another of a certain race, or institutional practices that subordinate a certain race or ethnic groups, and a belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another (Jenkins, 2005), then in Nigeria, the differentiating histories, competing interests, demographic proportionalities tend to preserve and extend the domination, ability and reproduction of the dominant groups. Hence, anyone or a group of persons attempting to represent ethno-racial heterogeneities within the country, is considered disloyal because the long-lingering legacies of national characterisation has cemented the sense of homogeneity (Back and Solomos, 2000).

Therefore, the issue of pro-Biafra, sweeping across South-east and South-south regions supports this point. Indeed, contemporary Nigeria is facing human rights violations because the effect of federalization is to reinforce homogeneity across the nation, at the same time, concealing fear about proliferation of heterogeneity at the local level (Okongha, 2004). For this reason, Okongha exclaimed that the desperation of ethnic cleansing hiding under the cloak of “Federal Government of Nigeria” to continuously oppress, suppress, subdue and exterminate ethnic minorities in the eastern part of the country demands global attention and scrutiny (Okongha, 2004, P. 112).

## **[4] THE CONCEPT OF INCLUSIONARY DOMINATION**

### **4.1 Welfare and Social Policy Discrimination**

In Nigeria, there is an increasing evidence of total failure to access an “enabling environment” (Park, 1950, P. 72) for so many disadvantaged groups such that they are uncertain of their place in society. Some of whom are the peoples of Fulani nomadic descents in Gongola State, progenies of Ganye

backgrounds of Mambila Plateau region, and those from the Bakassi peninsular of Cross River estuary (The voice News, 2015). In the areas where these unwanted people live, there is a higher level of infant mortality and lower life expectancy due to conditions typically designed for them. According to Actionaid Nigeria (2015, P. 6), “you are born anywhere, anyhow and you can die anywhere, from anything”.

Despite the ‘Federal Character’ policy that demands absolute inclusion and equality for Nigerians, ethnic identifiers such as tribal marks, names and cultural identity affect people from these deprived groups (Segun, 2014, P. iii). As a result, many have to conceal their names or tribal identities to get registered in health care centres or schools that are located several kilometres outside their neighbourhoods.

Unfortunately, members of these groups, with full citizenship rights, cannot legally challenge or pursue complaints of racial discrimination because they have been negligibly subjected to primitive treatments and conditions. With such backgrounds, the gaze of these subjects is of daily frustrations, bitterness, envy and hunger (Essed, 1991). In Nigeria, the ruling class is aware of this denial, yet, nothing is done about it. It appears as if they are too busy or unconcerned because it is not their problem. Thus, the annihilations, limitations and social injustice experienced by the already disadvantaged people indicate that “it is what group you belong or born into” that determines the lifestyle you experience (Walby, 2007, P. 98).

This notion supported by Lancia (2011) has demonstrated that to be born into a minority group in Nigeria is like a world with no space where people are piled one on top of the other and the shacks squeezed tightly together. More so, Lancia describes them as a famished set of people on its knees, who are hungry for bread, meat, shoes and light, and always prostrating. For decades, these internally displaced sub-group families have been treated without respect and dignity, thus, their concentration in the worst, remote neglected regions of the country.

#### **4.2 The Issues of Citizenship rights and Forceful deportations**

Indeed, the notion of race and racist social arrangements are attributed to relations and formations within a society, which in turn, reduces citizenship rights for ethnic minority groups (St. Louis, 2005). For instance, in 2013, the “forceful” deportations and removal of Igbos from Lagos State to their “states of origin” illustrated a significant racial migration decision by elitist authorities (Vanguard, 2013, P. 1). Such an incident did not only violate personal liberty, choice and freedom of movement, but also sharpened the deepening divides over immigration, assimilation, national identity as well as hostilities against those identifiably from the minority.

Virtually, this gesture symbolises the “idea of Darwinism and scientific racism” (Mann, 2005, P. 94) that is associated with the perception of superiority and legitimation for exclusion against minority groups. Because strong attachment of the elite class to localities, regional and national territories, together with social and political identities provide instrumental motive for defending space from “invaders” (Vanguard, 2013, P. 1). As a result, policies in relation to the minorities have been weak and continuously shaped in favour of dominant ethnic groups and those in position of authority. Collectively, ethnic minority groups across Nigeria experience social exclusion and discrimination which is intentionally racist in character. Moreover, this signifies a wider national failure by the federal government to develop consistent and coherent policy for long term social interactions and unity for various communities within a genuinely pluralistic society (Saraki, 2014).

### **[5] ETHNO-RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND SUPERSTITION**

#### **5.1 The Issues of Women’s Subjugation**

In Nigeria, the strangeness of racism (Dikotter, 1992) is not only about the increasing differentiations and conditionality in the distribution and access to resources, but also on its relations with ethno-religious beliefs and superstition which is inextricably connected to sex and gender. The resulting effects lead to the deployment of ideological measures in the management of different sectional groups and regions by the ruling class who usually turn a “blind eye” in order to maintain electoral and hegemonic dominance (Halls, 1992, P. 35).

For example, throughout northern Nigeria, where the conservative Sharia Islamic Law is effective, young women and under-aged girls are forced into early marriages, and quite often, used as sex slaves (BBC News, 2014). According to Restoration for Abused People (2015), 45% of girls are married, usually against their will, by age 15, and 73% are married by age 18. It is estimated that only 2% of 15-19 year old married girls attended formal education.

Similarly, Nigeria Working Group (2014) emphasised that young women and girls are more likely to be victims of domestic violence, highly vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and could face a high risk of complications, even death during pregnancy and childbirth. Yet, "Islamic Caliphate" insists the whole matter is about tradition and customary rights (BBC News, 2014), thus, granting them permission to continue with these practices.

In effect, this tactical conspiracy and capacity by the elite class to manipulate the feelings of the already delineated has placed women in position of exploitation and servitude which severely constrained any hope of emancipation (Davis, 1981). By institutionalising Sha'ria, racism has been "rendered invisible, untouchable and unnoticeably polluting" because any terms of reference have been eclipsed (Winant, 2001, P. 115).

Crucially, the common denominator of abuse and exploitation scenarios is the use of force, fraud and pressure on the grounds of ethno-religious beliefs (Pleasance, 2015). Pleasance notes that by definition, abduction of women, forced marriage of young girls and children, including sexual exploitation within commercial sex industry or private homes, is slavery. Yet, in Nigeria, it seems the authorities support enslavement because failure to address female subordination, forced labour, debt bondage and sexual exploitation, have contributed to the new framework of racially structured and patriarchal capitalism (Williams, 1989).

## **5.2 Witchcraft Accusations**

In another development, children accused of witchcraft in contemporary Nigeria risk abuse, torture and death. Reports by Safe Child Africa (2015) revealed that in southern Nigeria, particularly in Akwa Ibom State, incidents of misfortune such as breakdown of marriages, loss of jobs, deaths of a relative, and contractions of disease like HIV/AIDS are caused by the child witches. These accusations are severe because in these communities, it is culturally believed that all problems of life have a spiritual origin, and the child witches have the power as the epitome of evil to wreak havoc (Ajayi, 2009).

Throughout the society, victims of witchcraft accusations suffer physical, emotional and psychological abuse from their families and communities. Such exorcism includes bathing the accused children in acid, forcing them to drink hazardous substances, starving them to death, and quite often, forcing them to live on the streets. According to UNHCR (2015), about 80% of these children are rejected from schools and are significantly vulnerable to human traffickers and rapists as they cannot defend themselves. Quite often, Pentecostal-Charismatic churches that mix Christianity with African beliefs play a major role in spreading and sustaining the conviction because pastors who claim to be healers of such spell, charge exorbitant fees to exorcise them (Pioneer News, 2010). Indeed, superstition is other form of domination in Nigeria. Here, fatalism relieves the oppressor of all responsibility since the cause of wrong-doing, poverty, ill-fortune and the inevitable are attributable to destiny (Back and Solomos, 2000). By implication, the person has accepted the devastation decreed by God because he draws on the terrifying myths that are prolific and prevalent in the underdeveloped communities.

This atmosphere of myth, superstition and magic that permeates the indigenous society incorporates everyone into the "sphere of traditions, history of the land and the group" (Cooper, 1892, P. 73). She explains that under this condition, the people are terrified to urinate, spit or go out in the dark. Thus in Nigeria, the magical, supernatural powers continue to define where one can go, what one can do, how one is seen and treated, and the people who were once relegated to the background, are now thrown into complete disarray.

Basically, such collective self-destruction reinforces the elites' position of domination and exclusion and abysmal failure in the implementations of state welfare programmes and social policy (William, 1989). Therefore, under current developments, it is quite clear that young women and children do not

only experience abuse, exclusion and discrimination solely on the grounds of gender, but also through state origin, sexual orientation and ethnicity.

## **[6] BUREAUCRACY, CORRUPTION AND RACIALISATION**

Apparently, Nigeria is a divided society where millions of its citizens live in a “compartmentalised world” (Banton, 1983, P. 32), and by penetrating its geographical configuration and classification, it becomes clear how the country is organised and governed. With the notions of racism, achievements by the elite class is seen as a zero-sum game by which one group has to fail in order for the other to win (Hall, 1992). Thus, the tricky relationship between the peoples of the north and the south has serious deleterious effects on the nation’s cultural norms and societal values. Because democracy in the country has been reduced to a system under which power is automatically vested in the hands of the privileged group (Kodjo, 2010).

In specific terms, racism has been established in Nigeria such that it manifests in language, ideas, policies, economic stratification, social segregation, markets, hiring, opportunities, promotional schemes and access to a variety of social services. In this sense, competition for resources is set in terms of ‘us versus them’ (Fenton, 2003, P. 17), and cooperation to advance a common cause for the down trodden never gets traction

Hence, the distribution of power within the hierarchies and allocation of resources to various regions favour those at the top, and perceiving oneself on the right side provides the foundation for a legitimate claim for greater resources (Reed, 2006). Consequently, these racial conception and racist social arrangements indirectly stifle development, cloud judgement, encourage selfishness and deprive the nation the best of the contributions from the perceived inferior group because the privileged group has already predetermined that what the minority offers has no value (Law, 2010). Unequivocally, the key concept of leadership in Nigeria is about the acquisition of wealth and power which centres on “who gets what, when, but not how” (Nwadike, 1985, P. 102). Nwadike discloses that often times, discharging official duties includes arrogation of benefits for oneself, friends and relatives, as well as obstructing others from complying with ethical procedures.

Here, Marx and Engels (1884) explained that such ill-organised conspiracy is always in the interests of the ruling class who controls the city, sets the rules and the laws so as to exploit the masses through ignorance and alienation. Similarly, Jenkins (2001) said that the ideas of abuse of office have been secretly knotted and sedimented institutionally because racism has to do with a set of views, characters and behaviour.

Behind the scenes, such racist constructions convey huge opportunities for bourgeois class to promote their personal interests, ambitions, achievements, choices and life chances (Spickard, 2005). At the same time, extortion, mismanagement, looting of treasuries, misuse of public funds, lies and cover-ups are taking place secretly as the Masters are incapable of separating the role of self from that of government. In other words, significant degree of vulnerable financial insecurity, poverty, negligence and underdevelopments are created in all areas within the society (The Economist, 2015).

Without doubts, such engagements tend to generate false representation, fabricated wealth, political patronage and hero worshipping which do not benefit the already forgotten. In addition, these habits go alongside with dishonesty which covers all instances of favouritism, nepotism, kickbacks, bribery and the use of influence to run public institutions (Osinubi, 2001). Hence, in Nigeria, the socio-political structure and leadership roles promote racialisation because those along the corridors of power are hopelessly tainted with personal ambitions and naked self-interests that are pursued by any means necessary.

At this juncture, the life of the minority does not matter anymore (Mann, 2005; Modood, 2005), its image is no longer considered to have any value, and quite often, he is seen as a problem. This is true because the bourgeois class constantly catch the secretive glance, and realize that the downgraded ones want to take their place. Certainly, there is not one subject, at least once a day, who does not dream of becoming wealthy or taking the place of the rich class. As Goldberg (2006, P. 347) describes it, “Born in, but not of, the society. Being here, but not belonging”. Precisely, in Nigeria the situation has become “each according to his ability, each according to his needs” (Marx, 1884, P. 52). While these are going on, the media, the NGOs, the civil society and the judiciary which ought to be the last hope of the oppressed and the suppressed, are intimidated because fraudulent activities have

provided a “legitimate way” for the ruling class to influence their opinions including bureaucratic appointments of the legal executive officials (St. Louis, 2005, P. 73).

Therefore, with this racially entrenched complex pattern of social behaviour and policies, it is abundantly clear that hard-working men and women, toiling year in and out, from sunrise to dusk, out of which they must feed, shelter and clothe themselves and families, will always remain frustrated, excluded, dehumanised and abandoned by those in the position of authority (Reed, 2006).

## CONCLUSION

Although modern theory assigns racism exclusively to the West and as a phenomenon that emerged with capitalism (Law, 2010), yet, in Nigeria, it is incorrect when the processes of racialisation are taken into accounts. Racism in the country is more than theorising about human differences or discerning on physical characteristics and abilities. Rather, it points to the fact that the success of independence has been transformed into new patterns of social injustices and unfairness that are directed to preserve and sustain a permanent racial hierarchy believed to be divine or decreed by Nature (Banton, 1983).

Indeed, the appearance and consolidation of racial nuances in the country have shown resilience and have moved to the centre in terms of global recognition. Therefore, it will be concluded that the poly-racism that is going on in Nigeria is grounded on the ideas and assumptions of status, power, identity, culture, democracy, modernity, development, labour as well as concepts of social actions and agency (Winant, 2001). Hence, the effort of this investigation is not to do away with race or get beyond race, but to reshape contemporary understanding and debates over established racial inequalities, racial hierarchy, and racial subjugation in the country (Friedman, 1994).

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